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2 Fraleigh Street  
Red Hook, New York  
January 20, 2001

U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
Dockets Management Branch  
5630 Fishers Lane - Room 1061  
Rockville, Maryland

Gentlemen:

I am writing to urge the Food and Drug Administration to grant petition 98P-0151/CP1 to prohibit the slaughter of downed animals.

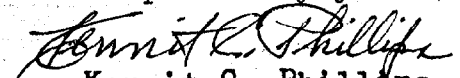
Animals who are too ill or injured even to stand should not be allowed to enter the human food chain. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will no longer accept ground beef that includes product from non-ambulatory cattle, commonly known as "downers." This development shows a growing consensus - even among livestock industry and government officials - that the marketing and slaughter of downed animals is unacceptable.

In addition to posing an increased risk for bacterial contamination, there is evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or "Mad Cow Disease"), a disease which has been linked to a fatal human illness that is referred to as CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease).

It is impossible to move downed animals humanely, so they are typically dragged with chains or pushed with tractors. These inhumane processes, which involve outrageous cruelty or wanton brutality, cause extreme suffering and injuries - the latter ranging from bruises and abrasions to torn ligaments and fractured bones.

Downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered; prohibiting their marketing will cause no undue economic hardship. In fact, industry experts have estimated that 90% of downed animals can be prevented with better care and handling. Of course, those who happen to be seriously ill or diseased should be humanely euthanized and then buried or cremated. This would serve to help prevent the spread of any fatal disease among other animals, including humans who are a species under the genus animal because of their basic biological sameness.

Respectfully yours,

  
Kermit C. Phillips

98P-0151

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Refer: Docket Number 98P-0151/CP1

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~~~~~Very Important